

YU Faculty Council
November 20
Minutes

Present: Leslie Salzman (Cardozo); Neer Asherie (YC); Charles Swencionis (Ferkauf); James Kahn (YC); Jeffrey Freedman (Stern); Gabriel Cwilich (YC); Anatoly Frenkel (Stern); David Carlson (Cardozo); Lynn Levy (Wurzweiler); Yehuda Willy (Riets); Alex Citanna (Stern); Abe Givner (Ferkauf); Will Lee (YC); Marina Holz (Stern); Moshe Krakowski (Azrieli); Abraham Ravid (Syms); Joseph Kerstein (Syms); Nora Nachumi (Stern)

After the minutes of the previous meeting were approved, the Council turned its attention to the items on the agenda.

1) Provost Botman reported that the University has associated itself with an experienced 'partner' to aid faculty in designing on-line courses. The partner is called Ellucian. It will begin work on December 1. In addition, the University is creating a School of Continuing Education, of which YU Global will be a part. A new dean will be hired to direct this school, which will encompass master's as well as associate's degree programs. Questioned on various aspects of these new initiatives, Provost Botman indicated that undergraduates will not be eligible to take classes in the Continuing Education Program (i.e., associate's degree classes). Students taking those classes will be separated off from the YC and SCW student bodies. She also mentioned that plans are afoot to create an on-line master's degree in management. Finally, in response to questions about budget resources, she noted that the University has received a donation of \$15 million to support the School of Continuing Education. It's unclear what kind of faculty governance will operate in this new entity.

2) Finance Committee reported on what it was able to learn from its meeting with the chief financial officer of the University about the 7 percent decline in the value of YU endowment. The financial officer claimed that the decline had to do with the Einstein deal, which remains shrouded in mystery and which he himself could not elucidate, but he insisted that investment returns for 2013-14 were 12 percent, which is in line with the performance of other university endowments during the same period. Roughly \$130 million were withdrawn from the endowment in connection with Einstein deal. Charles Swencionis noted that the Executive Committee will be meeting with Chairman Straus on December 11. At that time, the matter of President Joel's financial compensation as reported in the *Forward* will be discussed.

3) Neer Asherie reported on changes in benefits. In the past, benefits were managed out of Einstein. From now on, the office will be on the Wilf Campus. Yvonne Ramirez will be leaving in January; Jane Gonzales will replace her, and will make a presentation to the Faculty Council. Faculty contributions to health insurance plans will not increase in the coming year, but the cost to YU will increase because the

overall insurance pool has shrunk with the departure of Einstein. 'Small-pool effects' are also a problem in regard to life insurance. Efforts are under way to expand the pool by joining with other Jewish institutions. The Board does not consider it a priority to restore the 7 percent matching fund for retirement.

4) Volunteers were solicited to work with Provost Botman on organizing a promotion and tenure symposium, the goal of which would be to address the concerns of tenure-track faculty about requirements for promotion. The question was raised whether this should be a one-time or a regular event, and whether it should be expanded to include associate professors. Further discussion will take place at the Faculty Council meeting on December 4.

5) Faculty renewed their request for annual reappointment letters. In response, Provost Botman indicated that efforts are under way to automate HR. Once that job is completed, reappointment letters will go out every year. Until then, however, the University lacks the manpower to send out letters.

6) Jim Kahn and Will Lee reported on Strategic Planning Committee, which includes Provost Botman and Dean Bacon, and which encompasses various task forces—e.g, 1) student academic life experience; 2) faculty culture and development; and 3) revenue generating academic programs. Faculty representation on these task forces is needed. The goal is to plan where the University should be in 5 years. The question was raised whether the Board will support recommendations of the Committee; otherwise its work is futile. A motion was introduced to circulate a list of the task forces with a request for volunteers to serve on them. The motion was carried.

Submitted by: Jeffrey Freedman (Stern College)